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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

Forty-sixth session

# UNHCR ACTIVITES FINANCED BY VOLUNTARY FUNDS: REPORT FOR 1994-1995 AND PROPOSED PROGRAMMES AND BUDGET FOR 1996

## PART VII. HEADQUARTERS

## Addendum 1 - Assistant High Commissionner (Policy, Planning and Operations)

(submitted by the High Commissionner)

GE.95-02878

## I. PROPOSAL

1. In recent years, UNHCR has been confronted by successive emergency situations and has been engaged in numerous special operations. The increased complexity and magnitude of UNHCR's operations, accompanied by a consequent growth in budget and staff, have placed additional demands on the management resources of the Office, particularly at the executive level. These fundamental changes in UNHCR's activities have added greatly to management's need for a stronger policy-making capacity. In turn, improved policy-making will require stronger capacities within the Office for analysis and planning. It also calls for interaction between policy development processes and the direction of operational activities, which in turn needs strengthening.

2. Addressing these organizational needs for more rigorous policy development and implementation, the High Commissioner created in her Executive Office the position of Director of Policy Planning and Operations. The High Commissioner reported to the Executive Committee on this initiative at its informal session on 17 January 1995.

3. After several months of experience with this new function, the following has become still more evident:

- effective and accurate planning requires an integrated approach, taking into account issues relating to protection, programme coordination, programme management, external relations and administrative management;

- ensuring consistency and coherence between policy development and policy implementation requires strengthening the capacity of the Executive Office of the High Commissioner to supervise the expanded range and magnitude of the Office's activities; and

- while greater operational coherence, support and coordination between Regional Bureaux and Divisions has been achieved, clearer hierarchical and reporting lines would further enhance the Office's management capacity at the executive level.

4. Thus, in order to respond more effectively to the enormous management challenges confronting the Office, the High Commissioner has identified a clear need to strengthen further senior management at the executive level. It is proposed, therefore, that the position of Director of Policy Planning and Operations be reinforced and that this be reflected by creating the post of Assistant High Commissioner (Policy, Planning and Operations) at the level of Assistant-Secretary-General, with hierarchical and reporting lines and authority commensurate with the post's responsibilities.

## II. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5. The duties and responsibilities for the proposed post would be as follows:

- The Assistant High Commissioner shall assist the High Commissioner and Deputy High Commissioner in the formulation of UNHCR's policies, in initiating and developing strategies to facilitate the discharge of the High Commissioner's mandate, and in exercising oversight of the implementation of such strategies by the relevant organizational units in UNHCR.

More specifically, the Assistant High Commissioner shall:

- exercise supervision of the five Regional Bureaux, with particular emphasis on the policy formulation, planning, and implementation of major operations;

- oversee the Division of External Relations and, in particular, be responsible for liaison and integrated efforts with the United Nations Secretariat, the United Nations system, and other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations;

- ensure effective coordination between the Division of International Protection and the Regional Bureaux on issues of major policy concern;

- plan and undertake high-level initiatives to avert, contain and resolve refugee and related humanitarian problems;

- oversee the development of longer-term policies and related research in UNHCR; and

- assist the High Commissioner and the Deputy High Commissioner in the overall management of the Office and, in the absence of the High Commissioner and Deputy High Commissioner, serve as Officer-in-Charge.

## III. RESOURCES

6. For 1995, the post of the Director of Policy Planning and Operations is covered through the temporary redeployment of a D-2 post from a Regional Bureau; in addition, temporary posts for an Executive Assistant (P-3) and Secretary (G-5) were created to support the work of the Director. For 1996, the Assistant High Commissioner (ASG) would be supported by an Executive Assistant (P-4) and a Secretary (G-5). The recurrent staff costs for these positions would be $ 463,900 (ASG: $ 223,600; P-4: $ 147,600; G-5: $ 92,700). Given the fact that in 1995, temporary P-3 and G-5 support posts are already budgeted for, and that the D-2 post which was temporarily redeployed will revert at the end of 1995 to the affected Regional Bureau, the additional budgetary requirements in 1996 would amount to $ 247,100; this represents the

costs related to an ASG post, and the difference between a P-4 and a P-3 post. The resources for this new senior management post (ASG) should be considered in the light of the discontinuations of two Deputy Director (D-1) posts at Headquarters (Americas, effective 1 January 1995; Asia and Oceania effective 31 December 1995).

## IV. CONCLUSION

7. The creation of this post would ensure an institutionalized policy-making mechanism with combined analysis, planning and operational capacities. The High Commissioner is convinced that the Office will derive significant further benefits as a result, not only in well-focused strategic policy thinking and planning on issues related to the mandate of the Office and associated humanitarian activities, but also in the cohesiveness and effectiveness of its operations.